THE
GEORGE REEVES
NEWS ARTICLES
FILE

COLLECTED BY
LOU KOZA

JULY 2, 1959
(events of the 1st)

Through to September 16, 1965
Few Teens at Reeves' Last Rites

BY LEE BELSER
Staff Writer

Only a handful of teen-agers all girls were among 150 persons who attended funeral services yesterday for George (Superman) Reeves.

One of them, 17-year-old Helena Hauser, broke into sobs in the middle of the services. She was Reeves' god-child, the daughter of an old friend and pallbearer, Dwight Hauser.

Mrs. Helen Bessolo, Reeves' mother, sat to one side, her face hidden behind a black veil and dark glasses.

Lawyer on Hand

She attended the last rites held at Gates, Kingsley & Gates, Mortuary West Los Angeles, with her lawyer, Jerry Giesler.

The casket, covered with brilliant red carnations and backed by a dozen varied floral arrangements, remained open in the church following the services.

Outside, standing on the curb was a lone 8-year-old boy who came to pay his last respects to the Superman of TV fame.

Los Angeles Mirror
July 2, 1959

Lou Koza
Collection

Children Stay Home

A handful of fans were parked in cars on both sides of the boulevard, but there was no demonstration and no throngs of children as might have been expected.

The Rev. R. Parker Jones of St. Albans Episcopal Church officiated.

Reeves' body was temporarily entombed in the Woodlawn Mausoleum, Santa Monica, pending transfer to Cincinnati.

Film Friends Attend

Among Reeves' filmdom friends attending the last rites were actors Don DeFore and Gig Young and Mrs. Dan Dailey.

Police said the actor took his own life June 16, apparently because of his inability to get film and television work.

Neither Leonore Lemmon, Reeves' fiancée, nor Mrs. Toni Mannix, to whom he left the bulk of his estate, attended the services.
Superman's Mother Praises Independent

Mrs. Helen Bessolo yesterday asked The Independent to clarify statements made in other newspapers that she is a semi-invalid.

The mother of the late George Reeves, television's "Superman," said yesterday prior to her son's funeral:

"I am not semi-invalid as many of the other papers called me. I was in a state of shock, which is certainly understandable by any mother, and I arrived in Pasadena in a wheel chair because of my weakened condition. I interpreted their calling me a semi-invalid as a deliberate falsification and I want my hometown paper to clarify the matter."

Services for Reeves, whose body has been listed by Los Angeles police as a suicide, were held yesterday afternoon in Los Angeles.

"My attorney, Jerry Giesler, is in complete charge of the case. There will be a thorough investigation I can assure you," Mrs. Bessolo said.

The distraught mother is staying in her Pasadena home at 3417 N. Michigan Ave., where she said she would remain indefinitely.

She praised the Pasadena papers for the dignified manner in which they covered the death of her son and for the "gentlemanly" way she was treated by their photographers and reporters.

Only 33 persons attended the services yesterday for Reeves.

Lou Koza Collection

Pasadena INDEPENDENT

July 2, 1959
PROBATE COURT GETS GEORGE REEVES’ WILL

George (Superman) Mannix, Reeves’ mother, Reeves’ will with two codicils was submitted for probate yesterday in Santa Monica Superior Court. Mrs. Helen Bessolo, and a friend, Arthur Weissman, None of the beneficiaries in court, although Mrs. Bessolo has stated she plans to contest the will.

It directed that his home be given to Mrs. Toni Mannix, wife of Eddie J. Mannix. Reeves’ death was listed as a suicide in an autopsy following the June 16 death of Reeves.

Other effects are to be divided equally among Mrs. Mannix’s home.
The Voice Of Broadway
By DOROTHY KILGALLEN

... Lenore Lemmon's gayety at the Raintree the other night indicated she's recovering from the shock that followed the suicide of her fiance, George "Superman" Reeves ...

Sarasota Herald Tribune
September 22, 1960

THE MIDNIGHT EARL...
Lenore Lemmon flew home from Madrid to be with her mother Helen at her death. Mrs. Lemmon faced death as the late Wilson Mizner did; as she was sinking, she said to her daughter and a friend, "Why don't you go have a drink?"
Investigation Delays Burial of ‘Superman’

A private investigation of the shooting death of George Reeves television Superman, last June 19 has delayed burial of his body in a family plot in Cincinnati, Ohio, it was learned yesterday.

The investigation, which has included a second autopsy, was ordered by the actor’s mother, Mrs. Helen Bessolo.

Police investigators and Coroner Theodore J. Curphy found Reeves died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, but Mrs. Bessolo has insisted her son would not commit suicide.

Body in Cincinnati

The body was taken to a vault in Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati, but plans for burial have been postponed until the investigation is completed.

Funeral services were conducted here at Gates, Kingsley & Gates Mortuary last July 1.

Superman’ Death Probe Continues

Pasadena (UPI) -- The gunshot death six months ago of actor George (Superman) Reeves was still under investigation today by a private detective firm hired by his mother.

Reeves’ body will remain in a crypt in Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati, Ohio, without a decision on a final resting place until the inquiry is completed. An autopsy by physicians hired by Reeves’ mother also has been conducted for lack of a final resting place until the inquiry is completed. An autopsy by physicians hired by Reeves’ mother also has been conducted.

Mrs. Helen Bessolo, the actor’s mother was not satisfied with the official ruling by authorities that her son committed suicide. His body was found June 16 in his home.

Mrs. Bessolo has maintained her son was a victim of foul play. She said he had no motive to take his own life.

Investigation is being conducted on the premise another woman was present at the time of the alleged suicide.

Other points questioned by Mrs. Bessolo include conflicting pathological evidence at the time of the death and the knowledge of at least two women vied strongly for Reeves’ affections.
SUPERMAN
WATCH THE MIGHTY MAN OF STEEL!
WEEKDAYS 4:30 PM
WSJS Television
WINSTON-SALEM / GREENSBORO
COMING SEPTEMBER 7
TWO GREAT SHOWS
Every Monday thru Friday

SUPERMAN
Faster than a bullet
Stronger than steel
The All-American hero
S-U-P-E-R-M-A-N
SEE HIM AT 5 P.M.

... AND
AT
5:30
P.M.

BRODERICK CRAWFORD
starring in
"HIGHWAY PATROL"

Action!
Suspense!
Drama!

BASED ON ACTUAL EXPERIENCES
OF STATE HIGHWAY PATROLS

WROC
ROCHESTER, N.Y.
TV 8
CHANNEL 8
BASIC NBC
Mrs. Helen Bessolo, 65, mother of television's "Superman" actor George Reeves who shot himself to death five years ago, is dead.

Until her death in a Pasadena hospital Thursday, the frail, gray-haired, semi-invalid woman never waivered in her contention that her son was murdered and did not commit suicide.

She steadfastly refused to accept the coroner's verdict eight days after Reeves' death June 16, 1959, that the actor's gunshot wound in his Benedict Canyon home was self-inflicted.

"It was so unlike my son to do such a thing," she maintained. Mrs. Bessolo employed attorney Jerry Giesler and others to help prove it was not suicide, but the coroner's verdict was never changed.

Mrs. Bessolo's home at 1447 N Michigan Ave., Pasadena, is a museum of "Superman" memorabilia. It is filled with photographs of her son in his most popular role and other mementos of the characters Reeves portrayed for nine years.

Reeves' mother, a widow, came to Pasadena from her Galesburg (Ill.) home immediately after the actor's death. She stayed on, never to return to her native state.

"She never talked about anything else except her son. Not a day passed that she did not mention her rejection of the suicide label to his death," said a neighbor.

Turner and Stevens Mortuary, Pasadena, has Mrs. Bessolo's body. The mortuary said no arrangements have been made as yet, but understandings that services will be in Galesburg.
Pasadena, Calif. — UPI — "I don't know if she gave up the idea it wasn't suicide, but she gave up trying to prove it. I don't think any mother could believe her son killed himself."

These were the words of a relative, Mrs. Charles E. Chase of near-by Whittier.

"She never talked about anything else except her son. Not a day passed that she did not mention her rejection of the suicide label to his death."

These words came from a neighbor.

Both persons were talking about a gray-haired, semi-invalid — Mrs. Helen Bessolo, 65, who died last Thursday in a hospital here, almost five years to the day her son killed himself.

The son was actor George Reeves, 45, best known to television fans as "Superman."

**Friends Puzzled**

The story of a mother's undying faith in her son began June 16, 1959, when Reeves shot himself with a German Luger pistol in his Benedict Canyon home.

The story was a big one. The actor's friends and business associates were puzzled as to why he would take his life.

However, they conceded that he had been having trouble landing television roles other than "Superman." Twelve hours before his death, Reeves told a reporter that he was happy about plans to go to Australia to promote "Superman."

He also planned to be married in a few days to Leonore Lemmon, 35, well known in New York cafe society circles.

Miss Lemmon was a guest in Reeves' home at the time. She told authorities she retired about midnight shortly after some visitors arrived. Reeves, she said, apparently got into a minor argument with the visitors and retired after apologizing to them.

"As he went up the stairs," Miss Lemmon told investigators, "I said, 'In a moment you will hear a gun. See, there—the dresser drawer is opening. He's getting the gun out. Now you will hear the shot!'"

There was a shot.

Miss Lemmon collapsed. She later told police she was "only kidding" when she told the visitors about Reeves getting a gun. "I cannot understand why George did such a thing."

An autopsy disclosed that Reeves was under the influence of alcohol at the time of his death, which was ruled suicide. A second autopsy was ordered shortly after the first and the suicide verdict again was delivered.

**Hired Detective**

Shortly after Reeves killed himself, his mother came here from Galesburg, Ill., and had his body sent to Cincinnati, Ohio, for burial in the family plot.

She steadfastly refused to believe he had killed himself and hired a private detective to investigate the case.

"It was so unlike my son to do such a thing," she maintained.

As the months dragged into years, the aging woman's crusade waned, but apparently not her faith in her son. Surrounded by photographs of him and other memorabilia, she lived out her days at her home here.

Death ended her long vigil. Funeral services were held today.
Advertising: TV Getting Superman in Color

NEW YORK TIMES, SEPTEMBER 16, 1965.

BY WALTER CARLSON

Tired of watching those old reruns on TV of George Reeves as Superman (or rather, watching your son watch those old reruns of George Reeves as Superman)?

Well, just as sure as there is a planet Krypton, relief is on the way. In the fall of 1966, a "new" Superman—he'll look the same as he does in the comics—will leap across network television screens in full color.

And what's more, he'll be joined, though not necessarily on the same network, by Batman and Aquaman—also in color.

This, at any rate is the plan of National Periodical Publications, Inc., a leading publisher of comics magazines, which has the rights to all three characters.

National Periodical recently signed a contract with the American Broadcasting Company, which will produce, through the facilities of 20th-Century Fox, a live-action Batman series. A pilot is now being filmed.

Prime-Time Scheduled

Jacob S. Liebowitz, president of National Periodical, said yesterday that the series was scheduled for a prime-time slot in the early evening. Selling it to a sponsor, or sponsors, of course, will have to await completion of the pilot film, which will cost between $380,000 and $400,000, according to Mr. Liebowitz.

The future of Superman on television is a little more nebulous. Mr. Liebowitz said his company was still negotiating with a major TV network for that superhuman immigrant from Krypton.

Unlike Batman, the new Superman will be animated, as will Aquaman, a not-so-familiar character that dates to the early 1940's. Alas, Aquaman, who will operate underwater, will have no superhuman powers.

Stage Rights Licensed

Mr. Liebowitz also said that the company had licensed the stage rights to Superman for a forthcoming Broadway musical, which now is being written by the authors of "Golden Boy." Production activity for the musical, to be called "It's Superman," is scheduled to start within "a few months," Mr. Liebowitz said.